



Home Injuries

While you are busy making your home safer so you will not fall, you might as well take the time to make your surroundings safe from a whole host of injuries that you or other family members could suffer. One out of three Americans do not know how to make their home safer and it shows. Nearly 21 million medical visits and 20,000 deaths result from home injuries every year. In our own state of Delaware, we rank eleventh in the country of accidental deaths due to home injuries. So we are giving you a *Things to Do* list offered by the Home Safety Council to give your home and the homes of those you love a solid safety check:

Home Injury Safety Check

- ☐ Install smoke alarms on every level of your home and test them monthly. This is something you should ask family members to do when you visit, so you are not trying to get up on chairs or stepladders to change batteries.
- ☐ Develop a fire escape plan and identify two exits out of every room and designate where to meet outside. Make sure pathways are clutter-free.
- ☐ Always stay in the kitchen while food is cooking on the stove and do not wear large, open sleeved tops or robes that can easily catch on fire.
- ☐ Replace standard dials on the stove with large, easy-to-read dials and make sure the OFF button is very visible (consider marking it red).
- ☐ Stay clear of using small towels or an apron to grab hot pots and plates, instead use actual potholders and have them easily accessible.
- ☐ Keep all stairways, paths and walkways well lit. Install lights at the top and bottom of the stairs.
- ☐ Post emergency numbers including the National Poison Control Hotline number 800/222-1222 next to every phone in your home. Grandparents need this number, too, if grandkids visit.



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Updated: April 2006

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- ☐ If your grandchildren are often in your home, install child locks on all cabinets used to store potentially dangerous items – poisonings are the leading cause of home injury deaths in Delaware.
- ☐ Constantly supervise children in or near water such as pools, ponds, bathtubs and buckets. Grandparents need to stay especially close by so they can quickly respond while children are swimming even in a small pool.

If you would like to learn about more ways to stay safe in and around your home then go to www.homesafetycouncil.org and check out their excellent Home Safety Guide. You can also write to AARP Fulfillment, 601 E Street, NW, Washington DC 20049 and ask for "How well does your home meet your needs" (D16270) geared to older homeowners. They will send you a great guide and checklist for free. Or visit their website at www.aarp.org and click on the top navigation bar "Family, Home and Legal" and then go to the "Home Design" navigation bar on the left for excellent safety tips and home design information.



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